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Michelle Dunn, Program Coordinator
Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful
Tel: (724) 836-4121 x113
Email: mdunn@keeppabeautiful.org
Web site: www.keeppabeautiful.org



Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful to Work with PennDOT to Reduce Cigarette Litter at State Welcome Centers

(August 11, 2022) Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is partnering with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation to implement the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program (CLPP) at 14 state welcome centers. A grant of \$20,000 for the program was awarded to Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful from the national organization, Keep America Beautiful.

The CLPP program began with a scan or physical count of cigarette butts and other tobacco products of each participating visitor center. Ash receptacles will be installed at each of the building's points of entry. Two other scans will be performed, one midway through the year and a final count at the end of the program.

"PennDOT is grateful to continue our collective efforts in litter-prevention and reduction through the CLPP program," PennDOT Secretary Yassmin Gramian said. "This program is another component of Pennsylvania's Litter Action plan and helps encourage the proper disposal of cigarette butts in receptacles instead of harming our communities and environment."

"This is a continuation of our work throughout the state to reduce the amount of cigarette and tobacco litter. In 2010, we started implementing the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program in our state parks and to date, we have worked with 41 of the 121 state parks with an overall, combined reduction rate of 64%," said Shannon Reiter, President of Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful.

In 2021, in collaboration with Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) the CLPP program was implemented in Sizerville, Little Buffalo, Cowans Gap, Laurel Hill, Keystone and Ryerson Station state parks. At the end of the program, there was a combined 62 percent reduction of littered cigarette butts at those parks.

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has a partnership with Terracycle to expand the program to include recycling and composting of the cigarette butt waste. Cigarettes collected through CLPP are shipped to Terracycle where the various materials that make up a cigarette are separated and processed. The filters are melted into hard plastic that can be remolded to make new recycled industrial products, such as plastic pallets. The residual tobacco and paper are separated out and composted in a specialized process.

According to [Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful's 2019 Pennsylvania Litter Research Study](#), over 500 million pieces of litter were found on Pennsylvania's roadways. Of the total estimated litter, 186.2 million or 37.1 percent were cigarette butts.

Cigarette butts that are thrown on the ground can contaminate soil and ground water with chemicals and heavy metals; fatally impact birds, animals and marine life who often mistake them for food; and the filters, made of cellulose acetate, never fully disappear from the environment.

“We can help change littering behaviors through education and convenient access to ash receptacles through the Cigarette Litter Prevention Program, said Reiter. We are thrilled to partner with PennDOT to assure our welcome centers are clean and beautiful for visitors and residents alike. We’re grateful to Keep America Beautiful for the funding that allows us to continue to invest in this highly effective program.”

The CLPP, created by Keep America Beautiful in 2002, is the nation's largest program aimed at eliminating cigarette butt and cigar tip litter. Since its inception, the program has been successfully implemented in more than 1,800 urban, suburban and rural communities nationwide. Over the past decade, participating communities have consistently cut cigarette butt litter by 50 percent based on local measurements taken in the first four months to six months after program implementation. Learn more at kab.org.

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About Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful

Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s vision is a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Since 1990, Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful has worked with hundreds of thousands of volunteers across the state to pick up nearly 152 million pounds of trash from Pennsylvania's roadways, waterways, greenways, vacant lots, forestlands and other community spaces. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful’s core programming focuses on litter and illegal dump prevention, cleanup, community greening, and proper waste handling and sustainable practices. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful works with many partnering organizations on the state and grassroots level to accomplish our goal of a clean and beautiful Pennsylvania. Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful is the state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful, Inc., the nation’s largest volunteer-based community action and education organization. To learn more about Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful, visit www.keppabeautiful.org.